

COLLECTIVIZATION OF AGRICULTURE IN THE SOVIET UNION II *

IN the summer of 1930 the Sixteenth Party Congress decided to revive the old policy of speeding up the development of collectivization. The possibility of new difficulties arising from such a course was believed to have been obviated by the governmental measures introduced in March of the same year. The immediate basic consideration which prompted such a policy is revealed by the following excerpt from the Congress Resolution: "The progress of the Spring sowing campaign of 1930 shows that on the basis of collectivization and the creation of State Farms, the Party is succeeding in solving the very difficult grain problem."¹²³ This statement made on the eve of the harvesting of the crop was partially substantiated, judging by the amount of grain with which the collectives supplied the State. In the year 1930 the collectivized farms turned over to the State at fixed prices over 75 million quintals of grain. This was three and a half times the amount sold by the kulaks in 1927-28,¹²⁴ or 1.6 times the amount of grain sold by the landed estates before the war. A comparison of this result with the quotas as announced showed that the grain collections had exceeded the quota limits. But notwithstanding this achievement, the fact remained that the gross output of the collectives was only slightly more than 26 per cent of the total grain output of the Soviet Union.¹²⁵ Allowing for a 5 per cent output contributed by the State farms, it is found that 69 per cent of the total grain production was concentrated in the individual agricultural sector. The predominance of the latter indicated that the State had

* The first part of this study was published in the *POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY* for March 1934.—ED.

¹²³ Iakovlev, I. A., *Red Villages* (New York, 1931), p. 112.

¹²⁴ *Shestoi Sexd Sovetov* (*The Sixth Congress of Soviets*), stenographic report (Moscow, 1931), p. 14.

¹²⁵ *Economic Review of the Soviet Union*, May 15, 1932, p. 240.

achieved only a partial solution of the grain problem. The Communists believed that if the above relationship should be reversed, the State would solve the grain problem completely, i.e., increase the supply for both home and foreign markets, create a solid fodder base, and facilitate the development of animal husbandry and technical crops. And in their opinion, nothing short of complete and rapid collectivization could achieve that result. Hence the resolution of the Sixteenth Congress: "*To undertake a thorough revision of the Five-Year-Plan for the Development of Agriculture* on the basis of the tempo of collectivization established in the decision of the Central Committee [of the Communist Party] of January 5, 1930,"¹²⁶ that is, on the basis of a thorough collectivization of the individual peasant farms.

The policy of the government toward the kulaks remained unchanged; their uprooting, as an integral part of mass collectivization, was to proceed unabated. Lenin's cardinal principle underlying the collective farm movement, namely, the principle of voluntarism, was restated in a manner which for the moment left no doubt of the course to be pursued by the government:

Collective farms can be built up only on the *principle of voluntary entry*. Any attempt to apply force or administrative compulsion to the poor and middle-peasant masses with the view of having them join the collective farms, is a gross infraction of the [Communist] Party line and an abuse of power.¹²⁷

This attitude toward the poor and middle peasants formulated by the Sixteenth Party Congress soon after the exodus of a considerable number of the peasants from the collectives, may be interpreted as an appeal aimed at convincing the peasants of the advantages of a collective system of farming rather than forcing them into accepting such a system. However, the decisions of the Sixth Congress of Soviets which met during March 10-17, 1931, showed a change in this attitude. Iakovlev, in his report to the Congress, resurrected the

¹²⁶ Resolution of the Sixteenth Party Congress, adopted July 13, 1930, (Sec. 3, par. 1).

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, Section II, § 1. Italics in Resolution.

motto of the War-Communism period: "All those who are not with us are against us!" In other words, a peasant can be either for or against the collective movement and, by the same token, for or against the Soviet State. On the subject of the poor and middle peasants who failed to join the movement, Iakovlev said:

With whom are they, with the kulaks or with the collectives? Is it possible now to remain neutral—"I am, you know, neither with this one nor with that one"? It is not possible to be both with the kulak and with the collective. That is why, comrades, the problem of the individual poor and middle peasants is being interpreted in a new light.¹²⁸

The policy thus formulated was sanctioned by the Congress.

The promotion, however, of the huge agricultural program for 1931, calling for the collectivization of 66 million hectares,¹²⁹ received its greatest driving force not from the open attack on the kulaks, or veiled threat against the individual poor and middle peasants, but from the series of economic measures promulgated by the Soviet Government in January 1931.¹³⁰ The government decided to supply the villages with 120 thousand tractors at a cost of 200 million rubles (art. 1); to add 1,040 new Machine Tractor Stations to the existing 360, so that during the spring the collectivized farms alone would be served by 1,105 Machine Tractor Stations (art. 2); to double the supply of agricultural implements as compared with those furnished in 1930, at a cost of 768 million rubles. The largest part of these implements were to be turned over to the collective farms and Machine Tractor Stations (art. 3). In order to raise the yield in the collectives, they were to be supplied with 24 million quintals of fertilizers

¹²⁸ Iakovlev's report to the Sixth Congress of Soviets, *Pravda*, March 17, 1931.

¹²⁹ Control figures of national economy for the year 1931, *Pravda*, January 11, 1931.

¹³⁰ "Mery Pomoshchi Gosudarstva Selskomu Khoziaistvu" (Measures of State Aid to Agriculture), Decision of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, January 21, 1931, *Izvestia*, January 22, 1931.

(art. 5) and 21 million quintals of high-grade seed (art. 7). In addition to the enumerated provisions, the State took upon itself the task of subsidizing the collectives and the Machine Tractor Stations, with 1.5 billion rubles, the amount to be charged to the State budget and long-term credit funds (art. 9). Observing the title of this decree, one might be led to believe that this aid was intended for agriculture in general. But in reality, the collectives and the State farms were the only beneficiaries.

It was with a view to insuring the success of the present campaign as well as the future work of the collectives that the Soviet Government was concentrating its attention in three main directions: the improvement of the technical base of the collectives by the establishment of the above-mentioned Machine Tractor Stations, the organization of labor, and the distribution of income among the members of the collectives.

The main purpose of a Machine Tractor Station is to supply the collective with a highly developed technical base by means of the concentration of tractors and tractor-drawn agricultural machines into one center. In 1930 the average number of tractors per M.T.S. throughout the main producing regions of the U.S.S.R. was 41, with an average total capacity of 510 H.P.; the average area of the number of collective farms served by one M.T.S. was 10 thousand hectares, comprising an average number of 1,526 peasant farms.¹³¹ The M.T.S. played a significant rôle in increasing the size of a collective. Thus, in the main grain-producing regions, in 1930, a collective served by a Machine Tractor Station consisted of 236 peasant farms, covering an area of 2,190 hectares, while a collective not served by one comprised only 130 peasant farms with an area of 987 hectares.¹³²

The Machine Tractor Stations are of recent origin, but as the figures given below indicate, their development has been proceeding at a very rapid pace.

¹³¹ Nikulikhin, I. and Koravaev, A., eds., *Tekhnicheskoe Vooruzhenie Kolkhozov* (Technical Equipment of the Collectives), (Selkolkhozgiz, Moscow, 1931), p. 194.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 195.

	<i>Machine Tractor Stations</i>	<i>Tractors (in thousands)</i>	<i>H.P. Capacity * (in thousands)</i>
	I	II	III
1929	2.4	23.9
1930	159	31.1	372.5
1931	1400	63.3	848.0
1932	2446	74.8	1077.0
1933	2860	122.3	1782.0

* The figures in column I are taken from the following sources: for the years 1930-1931 from *Izvestia*, October 28, 1932; for 1932, from Iakovlev's address before the First All-Union Congress of Shock-Workers of the Collectives, *Pravda*, Feb. 19, 1933; for 1933, from Molotov's report on the National-Economic Plan for the year 1934, *Pravda*, Dec. 31, 1933. The figures in columns II and III are taken from Stalin's report to the XVII Communist Party Congress, *Pravda*, Jan. 28, 1934.

In connection with this table the following discrepancy in figures should be noted: whereas the number of tractors in the M.T.S. for 1930 and 1931 as quoted by Stalin amounted to 31,000 and 63,000 units, according to the *Izvestia* of Oct. 28, 1932, the number was 7,174 and 59,194 respectively.

With the help of these mechanical centers, "the self-activity of the peasants in building their collectives blends most completely with the organizational, technical aid and leadership of the proletarian State."¹³³ The model rules governing the relations between a Machine Tractor Station and a collective farm¹³⁴ throw some light not only upon the extent of the technical aid and leadership, but also on the manner in which they are perpetuated.

According to the model rules the machines supplied by the M.T.S. are utilized in plowing, sowing, reaping, threshing, sorting and cleaning the grain (par. 1). All the expenses in connection with the repairs of the M.T.S. equipment, purchases of spare parts and fuel oil, as well as the remuneration of the agronomic and technical personnel, are covered by the M.T.S. (par. 2 and 3). Since the Machine Tractor Stations cannot supply a sufficient number of machines to do the entire work, the members of the collectives must utilize their own collectivized agricultural implements and work animals for the first two years of the agreement (par. 18). All the field work,

¹³³ "O Proizvodstvennoi Programme Traktotsentra Na 1931" (Concerning the Production Program of the Tracto-Center for 1931), Decree issued by the Communist Party, December 29, 1930.

¹³⁴ *Izvestia*, December 1, 1930.

including the operation of the tractors, must be done by the members of the collective (par. 6).

The selection of agricultural machines needed by the collectives rests entirely with the M.T.S. (par. 20); all the modern machines owned by the collective are turned over to the M.T.S. on the basis of a special agreement (par. 19) and in order to increase the productivity of the collectives, the latter, in accordance with the demands of the M.T.S., must carry out all necessary agricultural improvements (par. 16). Because the M.T.S. control the basic implements of production, they take a leading part in formulating the production program and in supervising the actual progress of the work; the size of the sown area must be determined jointly by the M.T.S. and the collectives (par. 17). The M.T.S. must not only furnish the collectives with expert technical and agricultural aid, but must also train the new army of skilled agricultural workers (par. 13). Without the permission of the M.T.S. the collective farm cannot sell any of its work animals (par. 18).

In addition to its rôle in the mechanization of agriculture, in the organization of production, in the training of a new labor force, and in the preservation of the livestock, the M.T.S. occupies a very significant position in the work of grain collectives—a work with which the State is vitally concerned. In this connection two provisions of the agreement are of importance: first, for the services and expenses enumerated in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, the M.T.S. receives from each collective farm 25 per cent of the gross grain output (par. 23); if the M.T.S. performs only part of the work enumerated in paragraph 1, the Station is paid in grain at a fixed rate determined by the Tracto-Center (par. 23); where the M.T.S. takes part only in plowing and in sowing, it is paid either in kind or in money, in accordance with a special agreement between the collective farm and the M.T.S. (par. 23). Early in 1933 these provisions were subjected to a considerable change. According to the new Model Agreement all the services of the M.T.S. must be remunerated by the collectives in kind, not in money, and the fixed rate system of payment must be replaced by a fixed percentage of the gross crop of the collective.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ *Pravda*, Feb. 6, 1933.

Since the agreement between the M.T.S. and a collective farm has the full force of law, no deviation from the letter of the law is allowed under any circumstances. The share of the crop due to the M.T.S. for services rendered to a collective farm must be delivered by the latter in full and without any delay whatever.¹³⁶ Second, according to the agreement in force until February 1933, immediately upon the completion of the harvesting campaign the collectives had to turn over to the M.T.S. all the surplus grain at a price fixed by the State (par. 24). Although the amount of this surplus was determined yearly by an agreement between the collective and the M.T.S., this surplus could not be smaller than the general norm of grain collections for all the collectives of a given administrative region.¹³⁷ Although this provision was obviated at a later date,¹³⁸ under the new system in force the M.T.S. were expected to deliver to the State in 1933 more than 12 per cent of the total amount of grain collections.¹³⁹

In the light of the enumerated activities, it is patent that a Machine Tractor Station is not only an agency created by the State to mechanize the work of a collective farm but also an instrument for the control, regulation and subordination of the private interests of the members to the general agricultural policies of the State as a whole.

One of the central problems of the collectivization policies of 1931 turned around the question of a proper method of distribution of income. The Communists held that during the transitional period of Soviet economics, distribution of income

¹³⁶ "Ob Oplate Kolkhozami Naturoi Rabot Proizvedennykh M.T.S. po Dogovorom s Kolkhozami" (Concerning the Payment in Kind by the Collective Farms to the M.T.S. for the Work Done by the Latter in Accordance with the Agreement between the M.T.S. and the Collective Farms.) Decision of the Council of the Commissars of the U.S.S.R. and Central Committee of the Communist Party, *Pravda*, July 26, 1933.

¹³⁷ "Poriadok Zdachi Khleba Kolkhozami Obsluzhivaemyi M.T.S. Traktorsentra" (Method of Grain Deliveries of the Collectives Served by Machine Tractor Stations), *Izvestia*, Aug. 27, 1930.

¹³⁸ See Decree on the obligatory delivery of grain to the State by the collective and individual farms of Jan. 19, 1933.

¹³⁹ "Velikaia Podeda Partii" (The Great Victory of the Communist Party), editorial in *Bolshevik* No. 23, p. 6 (Moscow, 1933).

in a collective must be based upon the amount and quality of work performed by each member of the collective. The formula, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs", could not stand the test in the village for the simple reason that "everyone would first try to satisfy his needs, letting the others work according to their abilities."¹⁴⁰

At the same time, when the artel rules were being formulated, the Communist Party did not consider it necessary to go beyond the general instructions concerning the distribution of income contained there, leaving the working out of the details to the discretion of the members of the collective farms. The latter, however, settled this all-important problem with little regard for the policy enunciated by the Communist Party. Whatever benefit a collective system of farming holds out for the peasant, in his opinion a collective must feed not only the members who participate fully in performing certain tasks, but also those who, because of age, poor health or lack of work, do very little work or none at all. To a large extent this was true of the private farm which was regarded as a provider for the entire household. In practice, therefore, the system evolved by the peasants amounted to the distribution of income according to the number of "mouths" to be fed. And on certain occasions, "the distribution", according to Iakovlev, "was based [in part] on those souls which were not yet born, but which in the opinion of the management of the collectives, should have been born".¹⁴¹ The "quantity and quality" principle was a dead letter at this particular time as far as the peasants were concerned.

The Soviet Government viewed this situation with grave misgivings. It interpreted it as emphasizing the interests of the peasant as consumer over those of the peasant as producer. The tendency was in the direction of an ever greater norm of consumption and, in the opinion of the Communists, out of proportion to the peasants' actual needs. Under such conditions "the commercial surplus, which must be turned over to

¹⁴⁰ Kletov, F., "Sotsialnaia Evoliutsiia Krestianstva" (The Social Evolution of the Peasantry), *Novyi Mir* (New World), pp. 193-4, Book 4 (Moscow, 1932).

¹⁴¹ Iakovlev, I. A., Report to the Sixth Congress of Soviets, *Pravda*, March 17, 1931.

the State, is being artificially decreased, thus impairing the obligation of the collective farms to the State."¹⁴² In other words, the successful completion of the all-important grain-collection program was endangered. Furthermore, equal payment for entirely different quantities and qualities of work done would lead to the shirking of certain kinds of work, and to a decline of labor discipline and labor productivity.

The governmental labor policy was summed up by Iakovlev as follows:

It is not true that in a communist society people will be equally rewarded. In a communist society, which will be a highly productive society, everyone will be rewarded according to his needs because there will be enough of everything for everybody and work will become a habit. But so long as there is not enough for everybody, so long as a material incentive to the workers in the form of a wage is necessary for the existence of the national economy, the only socialist method of distribution of income is distribution in accordance with the quantity and quality of the work done.¹⁴³

Hence, the following decision of the Sixth Congress of Soviets: "The distribution of the income of the collectives in accordance with the principle, 'whoever works more and better receives more', must become the rule for all the members of the collective farms."¹⁴⁴

The members of a collective receive their income in cash and produce. In accordance with the instructions of the Commissariat of Agriculture and the Collective Center, dated June 12, 1931, the cash income, after deducting the charges for taxes, insurance and debts, is divided as follows: First, 15 per cent in the old collectives (organized before October 1930) and 10 per cent in the new (organized after that date) is set aside for the indivisible fund. This fund is utilized for the

¹⁴² "O Khode Raspredeleniia Urozhaia v Kolkhozakh" (On the Progress of Crop Distribution in the Collectives), Decree issued by the Commissariat for Agriculture of the U.S.S.R. and the Tracto-Center, Moscow, August 30, 1930, printed in *Izvestia*, September 2, 1930.

¹⁴³ Iakovlev, I. A., *loc. cit.*

¹⁴⁴ *Shestoi Sezd Sovetov (The Sixth Congress of Soviets)*, stenographic report (Moscow, 1931), p. 18.

purpose of buying machines and livestock and for other capital investments; 2 per cent of the cash income, instead of 5 per cent provided in an earlier decree, is distributed according to the share of collectivized property contributed by each member of the collective. For the maintenance of a bonus fund to reward work of exceptional merit, a cultural fund, and a special fund for the support of members of the collectives undergoing special training, $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, 2 per cent and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, respectively, of the total cash income, are set aside.

The produce is distributed in the following manner: First, the share of the State is given priority over all claims.¹⁴⁵ Second, a seed fund is set aside for the fall and spring sowing campaigns, as well as a reserve or insurance seed fund amounting to from 10 to 15 per cent of the main fund. Third, a special food fund is created for the disabled, teachers, agricultural specialists and other non-manual workers of the collectives.

The remaining income of both cash and produce is distributed among the members in accordance with the number of "labor-days" entered in their work books. In this case a labor-day is an expended unit of labor of a definite quality and quantity and must not be identified with a working day. A successful application of this system depends, therefore, upon the establishment of the following norms: the quantity production per unit of time, the quality of work, and the proper application of these norms in the case of each individual member. All labor in a collective farm falls into seven categories.¹⁴⁶ The most skilled workers such as the chief tractor drivers, mechanics of sheaf-binders or chairmen of large collectives belong to the seventh category. Labor which requires very little or no skill at all, watchmen or messengers, for example, is classified under the first category. The five intermediary categories include the rest of the labor force in

¹⁴⁵ *Note:* The instructions contain no provisions dealing with the application of this rule in case of a crop shortage.

¹⁴⁶ "Ob Otsenke v Trudodniakh Razlichnykh Selsko-Khoziaistvennykh Rabot v Kolkhozakh" (Concerning the Evaluation in Workdays of the Various Types of Agricultural Work in the Collectives). Instruction of the Commissariat of Agriculture of Feb. 28, 1933.

accordance with the skilfulness of the farmer and the complexity of the task to be carried out.

The remuneration of a member of a collective farm is determined by the category under which he is classified. The scale between the seven groups varies considerably. A member of a collective farm of the seventh group who carries out his daily norm as determined by the management is rated with three work days;¹⁴⁷ those of the sixth, fifth, fourth, third, second and first categories are rated with 1.75, 1.5, 1.25, 1.00, 0.75 and 0.50 labor-days respectively. In other words, the labor of the most skilled group is paid six times as much as that of the least skilled. In practice, however, this relationship need not hold true at all times. If a member of a collective farm plows one hectare in one working day, which is the norm, he is credited with one labor-day; should he only plow one-half of a hectare in one working day, he is credited with one-half of a labor-day, but if he plows one and one-half hectares in one working day he is credited with one and one-half labor-days. Under this system, therefore, collective members who work the same period of time but with different skill and effort, are credited with a different number of labor-days.

The quality of production as a most important criterion in determining the remuneration due to the labor force is stressed in all decrees dealing with the organization of labor in the collective farms. Yet in very many collectives the number of labor-days with which the members were credited was being determined regardless of the quality of their work.¹⁴⁸ To combat this practice, and at the same time to stimulate them to greater efforts, the Commissariat of Agriculture decreed that, where the task set for a group of members of a collective is completed unsatisfactorily in the opinion of the management, the group's total number of labor-days must be reduced by 10 per cent; where, on the other hand, the completion of the

¹⁴⁷ The instruction of the Commissariat of Agriculture originally called for two labor-days, but the Council of Labor and Defense increased the rating by another labor-day. In this connection see V. Revchina's "Nekotorye Voprosy Kolkhoznoi Sdelshchiny" (Problems Pertaining to the Piece-Rate System of Work in the Collectives), *Pravda*, Jan. 4, 1934.

¹⁴⁸ Instruction of Feb. 28, 1933 (see note 146), Par. 5.

task results in a crop which is above the average, their effort is rewarded with a bonus amounting to an extra 20 per cent of the number of labor-days with which they are credited. The reverse holds true where the crop is below the average.¹⁴⁹

The entire labor force of a collective farm is divided into special groups known as "brigades".¹⁵⁰ These are the basic production units of a collective farm. The number of members in a brigade depends upon the nature of the task set aside for it. The brigades organized to carry out important field work consist of 40 to 50 members; in regions where the chief occupation is cattle raising, an average-size brigade consists of 20 to 25 members. The number and kind of machines and live stock assigned to a brigade, and for which it is fully responsible, depend upon the kind of work in which it is engaged. The brigades fall into two main groups: the specialized ones organized to carry out one particular kind of work and generally restricted to the large collectives, and the group of mixed brigades which find wide application in the smaller collectives and which do various types of work. The latter group is divided into permanent, seasonal and temporary brigades. The permanent brigade with a constant labor force and an assigned section of land is at present the basic type. Its function is to perform the entire cycle of work during the course of the agricultural year. Each brigade is assigned a definite production program, and the quantity and quality of work to be performed within the allotted time, as well as the evaluation of each task in terms of labor-days, are specified. In animal husbandry each brigade takes care of a definite share of the herd and the evaluation is based on the amount of the output rather than on the number of head of cattle cared for.

Theoretically, the entire labor force of a collective farm should be distributed among the various brigades. In practice, however, this was not the case in a great many collec-

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Sect. c. and d.

¹⁵⁰ "Ob Ocherednykh Meropriatiakh Po Organizatsionno-Khoziaistvennomu Ukrepleniu Kolkhozov" (Concerning the Current Measures on the Organizational and Economic Improvement of the Collectives), Decree of Central Committee of Communist Party of Feb. 4, 1932, *Pravda*, Feb. 6, 1932.

tives. In view of this fact, the Commissariat of Agriculture of the U.S.S.R. instructed the management of the collectives to the effect that, "Within a ten day period the entire membership of the collectives, with the exception of those who are engaged in work outside of the farm, must be attached to the permanent brigades".¹⁵¹ It is of paramount importance that the labor turnover of the latter be reduced to a minimum. Hence the decision "to enjoin, for a period of one year, the membership of the collective farms from leaving one brigade for another".¹⁵²

The brigade is led by a foreman or brigadier. The entire management of the labor unit is concentrated in his hands. As a rule, all the orders affecting the entire work of the brigades must be issued by or through the brigadier. He distributes the work among the members of the brigade, and is personally responsible for its proper execution.¹⁵³ His remuneration depends entirely upon the results achieved by the brigades. The brigadier is appointed by the management of the collective farm for a period of not less than one year; he can be discharged prior to the expiration of this period only upon the approval of the Regional Collective Farm Center.

The recession of the wave of collectivization had ceased long before the enactment of the basic features of the measures outlined above. At the beginning of October 1930 there were over 5.5 million collectivized households, or 22.2 per cent of the total number of farms. This was the low point for the year. From then on the curve of the movement continued upward. During the next three months 1.5 million farms joined the movement and the same number were collectivized during February 1931. On the eve of the Sixth All Union Congress of Soviets 35.3 per cent of all the farms had joined

¹⁵¹ "Ob Ukreplenii Brigad s Postoiannym Sostavom Kolkhoznikov" (On the Strengthening of the Brigades through a Permanent Labor Force), *Agricultural Bulletin of the Commissariat of Agriculture of the U.S.S.R.*, No. 14, par. 1 (1933).

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Instruction issued by the Central Control Commission of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the U.S.S.R., Nov. 14, 1933.

the collective movement.¹⁵⁴ The bulletins issued by the Commissariat of Agriculture¹⁵⁵ show a rapid and steady growth, larger in the main grain-growing regions, smaller in all other sections of the country. On June 12, 1931, the resolution of the Plenary Session of the Communist Party declared that collectivization in the main grain-growing regions had been completed and that in all other grain regions it was certain to be carried out by the end of the year or in the spring of 1932; that the M.T.S. had taken part in the cultivation of more than 20 million hectares or over one-third of the area worked in the spring; that each collective member had worked two to three times as much land as an individual farmer, and finally, what was most important, that the quality of work in the collectives had improved (sec. 1, par. C).¹⁵⁶ On August 2, 1931, the Central Committee of the Communist Party announced that the extent of collectivization, as decided upon during the Sixteenth Party Congress, had been exceeded. The following table bears out fully the Party's contention of overfulfillment in the sense that all the main grain-growing regions had been completely collectivized.¹⁵⁷

	<i>Collective Farms as Percentage of All Farms</i>	<i>Collective Area * as Percentage of the Total Area of All Farms</i>
North Caucasus	88	94
Ukraine (Left Bank)	69	80
Ukraine (Steppe)	85	94
Middle Volga (Left Bank)	90	95
Lower Volga (excluding Kalmyk Region)	82	92
Crimea	83	93

* Figures from August 2, 1931 statement of the Communist Party, *Pravda*, August 3, 1931.

¹⁵⁴ From Molotov's report to the Sixth All-Union Congress of Soviets, *Pravda*, March 12, 1931.

¹⁵⁵ *Pravda*, March 25 and 30, Apr. 5, 15, 25, 29 and May 6, 15, 26, 1931.

¹⁵⁶ "Predvaritelnye Itogi Seva i Zadachi Ubornoi Kompanii" (Preliminary Results of the Sowing and the Problems concerning the Harvesting Campaign), Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, August 12, 1931, *Pravda*, June 12, 1931.

¹⁵⁷ N. B. Complete collectivization of a region, according to the statement of the Communist Party of August 2, 1931, was understood to mean the collectivization of not less than 68.7 per cent of the total number of households and not less than 75.8 per cent of the total area of that region.

This numerical growth of the collectives in the spring of 1931 reflected, to a certain extent, the strength of the movement. But the first real test was the progress of the spring sowing campaign, the first results of which revealed that the execution of this work was proceeding very slowly. The sowing of the early spring crops was to have been completed by May 1, but such important grain-growing regions as the North Caucasus carried out only 66.4 per cent of the program, Ukraine 47.6 per cent, and the Lower Volga 27.8 per cent.¹⁵⁸ The situation assumed a more serious aspect in view of the fact that the cost of socialized farm equipment measured on a per hectare basis was 13 rubles in 1930, while in the spring of 1931 the cost had risen to 17 rubles and 80 kopeks.¹⁵⁹ This led to the query: "What prevents the Ukraine, where the collectivized sector and the technical base have been increased many times in comparison with last year [1930], from at least catching up with last year's tempo of work?"¹⁶⁰ The same query applied with equal force to a number of sections of the country and particularly to the Central Black Soil Region which, judging by the progress of its sowing campaign, was among the most backward regions. This tardiness on the part of the collective farms was bound to affect the crop adversely, since the sowing had commenced two weeks later than the usual date, due to a late spring.

Judging by the statements appearing in the official press,¹⁶¹ the slow tempo of sowing was due to the fact that the majority of the collectivized peasants had failed to adhere to the basic principles of organization of labor outlined by the Soviet Government. By July 1, 1931, only 36.6 per cent of all the collectives had received their work-books and only 22.2 per cent made regular labor entries.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ *Pravda*, May 6, 1931.

¹⁵⁹ Gaister, A., "Predvaritelnye Itogi Seva i Zadachi Uborochnoi Kampanii" (Preliminary Results of the Sowing Campaign and the Problems of the Harvesting Campaign), *Na Agrarnom Fronte*, No. 4-5 (1931), p. 4.

¹⁶⁰ *Pravda*, May 30, 1931, from editorial, "Na Borbu Za Uspeshnoe Zavershenie Vesenniago Seva" (In the Struggle for the Successful Completion of the Spring Sowing Campaign).

¹⁶¹ *Pravda*, May 6, 1931.

¹⁶² *Pravda*, July 7, 1931.

The harvesting campaign, too, had had its drawbacks. It was expected that in the North Caucasus, Lower Volga, Ukraine and Crimea, the harvesting of the winter crops would be completed by July 15, but by this date the collectives harvested only 40 per cent, 60, 67 and 70 per cent of the crops, respectively.¹⁶³ The results of this campaign in the most important agricultural section of the Soviet Union, the Ukraine, may be gauged from the following statement: "Last year's [1931] grain harvesting campaign was carried out unsatisfactorily. In a number of southern regions from 30 to 40 per cent of the crop remained on the fields."¹⁶⁴ This was not a result of the drought, which was so severe in certain parts of Siberia, the Urals, and the Middle and Lower Volga regions, that it reduced there the expected crops by about 50 per cent. No Act of God was involved in the Ukraine. The difficulties experienced in the sowing, harvesting and grain collection campaign of 1931 were man-made. In the opinion of Kossior, the then Secretary of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, the difficulties were primarily due to the fact "that we underestimated the importance of agricultural problems. We paid a great deal of attention to industry and considerably weakened our leadership in the village."¹⁶⁵

The effect of these factors is indicated by the gross grain output in 1931 of 780 million quintals.¹⁶⁶ Since the program for 1931 called for a gross grain output of 970 million,¹⁶⁷ the actual gross output was 20 per cent below the program.

The unsatisfactory crop results were a reflection of the lower yield per hectare. The insistence of the Soviet Government that, with the organization of Machine Tractor Stations, the

¹⁶³ *Pravda*, July 26, 1931, from editorial, "Pervye Uroki Khlebo-Zagotovki" (First Lessons in Grain Collection).

¹⁶⁴ Kossior, Secretary of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, Report Submitted to the Third Conference of the All-Ukrainian Communist Party, *Krestianskaia Gazeta* (Peasant Gazette), July 14, 1932.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Kulikov, P., "Itogi i Perspektivy Proizvodstva Zernovykh Kultur" (Results and Possibilities of Grain Production), *Planovoe Khoziaistvo* (Planned Economy), No. 5 (1932), p. 46.

¹⁶⁷ Control Figures, National Economic Plan for 1931 (Sec. 3, Par. 3), *Pravda*, Jan. 11, 1931.

increased use of fertilizers and selected seed, and the greater utilization of agronomic knowledge, "each collective, in comparison with the individual farm, must increase its yield per hectare in 1931 by not less than 60 per cent,"¹⁶⁸ was of no avail, as shown by the following figures:

PERCENTAGE COMPARISON OF YIELD PER HECTARE OF MAIN GRAIN CULTURES
OF COLLECTIVES AND INDIVIDUAL FARMS BY REGIONS—FOR 1931 *

*Yield per Hectare of Collectives as Percentages of
Yield per Hectare of Individual Farms*

Ukraine	103.3
Northern Region	106.3
Leningrad Region	102.2
Western Region	102.9
Moscow Region	104.8
Ural Region	102.4
Tartar Republic	104.8
Middle Volga	105.7
Lower Volga	105.7
Northern Caucasus	104.2
Crimea	102.4
Western Siberia	103.3

* Gechechkori, M., "Ob Urozhainosti 1931 goda i Borbe Za Ego Povyshenie" (Concerning the Yield of 1931 and the Struggle for Its Improvement), *Pravda*, Jan. 6, 1932.

The general figures given below indicate that in 1931 the per hectare yield in the collectives was 9.5 per cent less than in the preceding year. The same rate of decrease held true in the case of the individual farms. Furthermore, the yield per hectare in the collectives was only 5 per cent larger than the per hectare yield obtained by the individual farmers during the same year.

*Yield in Quintals per Hectare **

	1930	1931
Collective Farms	8.5	7.7
Individual Farms	8.0	7.3

* The figures for the collectives are taken from the table on page 45 in Kulikov's article, see footnote 166. For the individual farms, the figures are taken from the *Economic Handbook of the Soviet Union*, p. 66. The 1931 yield figure for the individual farms is based on the statement of M. Gechechkori to the effect that the average yield of the collectives exceeded the yield of the individual farms by 4.3 per cent. *Pravda*, Jan. 6, 1932.

¹⁶⁸ Beloutsky, F., *op. cit.*, p. 103.

Despite the lower yield, the total grain production of the socialized sector, as compared with the individualistic, clearly indicates the great part played by the former, as shown by the following figures.

GRAIN PRODUCTION *
(in millions of quintals)

Sectors	1929	1930	1931	In Percentage of Total		
				1929	1930	1931
State Farms.....	13.2	32.5	57.1	1.8	3.9	7.3
Collectives.....	27.0	232.1	436.8	3.8	27.8	56.0
Individual Farms.....	677.0	570.6	286.0	94.4	68.3	36.7
Total	717.2	835.2	779.9	100	100	100

* Kulikov, P., *op. cit.*, p. 41.

While in 1930 the collective farms were responsible for 27.8 per cent and the individual sector for 68.3 per cent of the total grain produced, in 1931 the respective positions of these two sectors were practically reversed. The fact that the socialized sector of the village, as represented by the collective farms alone, outranked the individual farms as producers of grain, was hailed by the Communists as a great achievement. They realized, however, that this achievement was due to the numerical growth of the collective farms rather than to the average yield per collectivized hectare. The very slight increase of yield on a collective farm over that of an individual farm was particularly striking, in view of the fact that the general technical reëquipment and State aid given to the collectives had reached a high mark. The Soviet Government was fully aware that

the main agricultural problem during the Second Five-Year-Plan must be that of yield [per hectare]. In this respect we practically did not shift from our position in the course of the last few years. There is an increase in yield [compared with the yield on the individual peasant farm] but a very insignificant one.

Now that we witness a rapid growth of utilization in agriculture of machines, tractors, combines . . . and also chemical fertilizers, we must set the problem of increase in yield as the central one for the workers in the field of agriculture.¹⁶⁹

This statement may well serve as an indication not only of the seriousness of the situation but also of the government's intention to press forward to a solution.

Regardless of the low crop, the immediate concern of the government was the fulfillment of the grain-collection plan for 1931. This policy was dictated by national-economic considerations. To indicate the relationship between a successful grain-collection campaign and the general policies of the State, the following passage will suffice:

*The struggle for grain, for the fulfillment and overfulfillment of the grain-collection plan, remains with us a component, inseparable part of our entire work aimed toward the completion of the foundation of the socialist economy. The grain-collection plan is the most important component part of the general national economy . . . which to a considerable degree determines our resources for the further development of socialist reconstruction.*¹⁷⁰

That the apprehensions of the leaders had a basis in fact is revealed by the slow progress of the grain collections in all important grain-growing areas. The Ukraine, which contributes one-third of the entire grain procurements program of the Soviet Union, indulged in dilatory tactics in parting with its grain. In many cases the collectivized peasants, instead of performing their obligations to the State in the order prescribed by the constitution of the artels and by the M.T.S. agreements, insisted on reversing the order, i. e., on first satisfying their own needs and then those of the State. "I shall not deliver a single pood [of grain]", declared the chairman of a collective, "until I have provided for my household, until I have created funds for those [members of the family] in the army, as well as insurance, seed and fodder funds. For

¹⁶⁹ From Molotov's report on the Second Five-Year-Plan delivered before the Seventeenth Conference of the Communist Party, *Pravda*, Feb. 6, 1932.

¹⁷⁰ *Pravda*, Nov. 2, 1931, italics in editorial.

all this I shall use the grain already in the granary and I shall deliver to the State only what remains from the latest threshing." ¹⁷¹ In official circles such an attitude toward grain collections was branded as a kulak practice. But even this grave charge and the threat which it implied failed at the moment to prevent the spread of such tendencies.

From the point of view of the State, the chief cause of the difficulty was in the mistaken attitude of the local Party organizations toward the collectives. The local organizers of the collectives seem to have believed that the grain-collection campaign would be carried out without any difficulty because the collective farms had become the predominant sector in the village. This belief, based on the unwarranted idealization of the collectives, caused the local Party leaders to forget that the collectives, being a newly established semi-socialistic form of agricultural organization, could not immediately change the old make-up of the peasant. The failure to appreciate this led to poor Party organization work in the villages and to the concomitant difficulties.

Of a radically different, and of a less involved, nature were the peasants' motives in retarding the grain collections. At the moment their actions were prompted by the fear, induced by unsatisfactory crops, that if they should part with too much grain, there might not be enough on hand to sustain them until the next crop. But the real and foremost cause is an old one, harking back to the era before the New Economic Policy and even before the October days. And it was restated now without losing any of its cogency and force: "First give us manufactured goods and then we will deliver grain", declared a peasant in one collective: "First shoe and clothe us, then ask us to work", declared a peasant in another collective.¹⁷² These peasants touched upon the real crux of the problem. The same consideration that influenced their actions through-

¹⁷¹ Novikov, I., "Khlebazagotovki, Borba s Kulakami i Melkosobstvennicheskimi Instinktami v Kolkhozakh Tsentralnoi Chernozemnoi Oblasti" (Grain Collections, the Struggle with the Kulaks and Petty-Proprietary Instincts in the Collectives of the Central Black Soil Region), *Sovetskoe Stroitelstvo* (Soviet Construction), Jan. 1932, p. 104.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

out the decade prior to mass collectivization, particularly during the period of military communism, reasserted itself now in the collectivized village. The peasants were asked once more to part with their grain in return for a quantity of goods which could hardly satisfy their basic needs. It is not strange, therefore, to see the peasant soldiering on the job and attempting to supply the State with as little grain as possible.

The government was not daunted by these tactics, and with characteristic energy proceeded to collect grain under the slogan that the first duty of a collective farm is to deliver to the State the grain collection quotas in full.¹⁷³ The Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. ordered that measures be taken immediately for the purpose of "rescinding all the orders issued by the Commissariats of Agriculture and Supplies in so far as they related to the creation of grain funds . . . at the expense of the grain collection quotas determined by the State."¹⁷⁴ These measures, together with the previous pronouncements that any delay in grain deliveries would be viewed as a counter-revolutionary act, were rewarded with a considerable degree of success. Thus, in spite of the early delays, Molotov reported, as early as November 3, 1931, that "the progress of grain collection . . . bears witness to the fact that we are successfully carrying out the grain collection program", and, what is more significant, "we have collected more than during the corresponding period of last year."¹⁷⁵ The veracity of this statement cannot be questioned. Even though the grain collections declined somewhat during the months of November, December and January, the net result of the campaign, as indicated in the following table, was that, whereas the gross grain output in 1931 was 55.7 million quintals less than in 1930, the total grain collection for the same year was larger by 4 million quintals than in 1930.

¹⁷³ *Pravda*, Oct. 19, 1931, Instructions issued by the Management of the Tracto-Center to the Directors of the Machine Tractor Stations.

¹⁷⁴ *Pravda*, Oct. 20, 1931, Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. (Art. 2), of October 19, 1931.

¹⁷⁵ *Pravda*, Nov. 3, 1931, from Molotov's address on the Fight Against the Drought, delivered at the All-Union Conference.

GRAIN OUTPUT AND COLLECTIONS *

(in million quintals)

	1930	1931
Gross Grain Output	835.6	779.9
Gross Grain Collections	225	229.3

* Kulikov, P., *op. cit.*, p. 41.

An explanation of how the government managed to achieve this result in view of the decline in the gross output and in the average yield per hectare is suggested in tables A and B.

TABLE A *

	Total Pro- duced	State Collec- tions	Percentage Collections to Total Produced	Yield per Hectare	State Collec- tion per Hectare	Percentage Change from Previous Year in	
						Yield per Hectare	State Collection per Hectare
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1930							
Collectives..	251.1	67.0	26.7	8.5	2.4
Individuals..	551.6	119.3	21.6	8.0	1.7
1931							
Collectives..	436.6	139.2	32.9	7.7	2.5	-9.5	+ 4.2
Individuals..	285.4	53.2	18.7	7.4	1.3	-7.5	-23.5

* The figures in columns 1 and 2 are from a card no. 108 entitled, "Puti Razresheniia Zernovoi Problemy—Materialy Komiteta Zagotovleniia pri STO" (Means of Solving the Grain Problem—Materials of the Committee for Supplies, of the Council of Labor and Defense) published by the Council of Labor and Defense in Moscow, 1932. The figures in column 4 are taken from the table at the bottom of page 223 of this paper. The remainder of this table is derived from these two sets of figures.

TABLE B

(based on Table A)

	1930	1931
Yield per hectare of collectives as percentage of yield per hectare of individual farms	106.25	104.0
State collections per hectare of collective farms as percentage of State collections per hectare of individual farms	141.1	192.3

These tables show that while in 1930 the yield per hectare in a collective exceeded that of a hectare cultivated by an individual farmer by 6.2 per cent, the grain collected from the former was larger than the amount collected from the latter by 41.1 per cent. In 1931 the respective figures were 4 per cent and 92.3 per cent. Furthermore, a 7.5 per cent decrease in yield per hectare on an individual farm in 1931, as compared with 1930, was accompanied by a 23.5 per cent decrease in grain collections, while a 9.5 per cent decrease in yield per collectivized hectare for the same period was followed by a 4.2 per cent increase in grain collections. Thus, by comparison with the collectives, the real beneficiaries were the individual farmers and the collectives shouldered the burden of supplying the State with an amount of grain which, as future developments proved, they could ill afford to part with.

That the presumably successful grain collections defeated their own ends, soon became evident. The State was compelled to return to the collectives part of the grain. On February 17, 1932, almost six months before the harvesting of the new crop, the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. and the Central Committee of the Communist Party directed that the collective farms in the eastern part of the country which had suffered from the drought, be loaned over 6 million quintals of grain for the establishment of both seed and food funds. Toward the end of the winter the shortage of food and fodder became apparent even in the main grain-producing regions which were not affected by the drought. As to the conditions in the Ukraine, Molotov stated that "as a result of errors committed in connection with the grain collections, there was created a very difficult food problem."¹⁷⁶ The nature of these errors was due to the fact that "frequently regions and collectives which had fulfilled their grain collection quotas were given additional quotas to fulfill and occasionally this was repeated three and four times."¹⁷⁷ It is largely for this

¹⁷⁶ From an address delivered by Molotov at the Third All-Ukrainian Conference of the Communist Party, *Peasant Gazette*, July 20, 1932.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

reason that in many sections of the Ukraine the fulfillment of the grain procurement plans meant parting with over 80 per cent, and in a few cases, with the entire grain crop of the collective farms.¹⁷⁸ Under these circumstances the morale of the collectivized peasant could not but be undermined, his initiative deadened and the productivity of his labor lessened. Yet the program for the year 1932 called for a great deal of intensive labor in order to extend the sown area of the collectives from 80 million hectares in 1931 to 108 million hectares, of which 76 were to be sown with spring crops.¹⁷⁹

The way in which this new program was carried out indicated that the collectivized peasants did not go about their tasks in the manner desired by the government. The main difficulty was in the slow tempo of work. By May 20 the collectives had carried out 53.5 per cent of their spring sowing program.¹⁸⁰ This was only 3 per cent below the corresponding period of 1931, but in view of the better equipment and more suitable climatic conditions than those which prevailed in the spring of 1931, the results were not satisfactory. Examining the progress of the work by regions, it was revealed that the three grain centers of the Soviet Union, the Ukraine, North Caucasus and Volga regions, were particularly behind in their work throughout the entire spring sowing period. This situation was not corrected, and instead of sowing the 76 million hectares which the program called for, the collectives completed their work with a 10 million hectare shortage.¹⁸¹

Before the end of the spring field work the government realized that should the peasants show the same lack of diligence in the harvesting of the crop as in the sowing, the entire agricultural program would be jeopardized. To remedy this situation the government enacted a series of economic measures which are known as the May Decrees.

¹⁷⁸ Lvov, A., "Protiv Opportunisticheskoi Praktiki v Khlebozagotovitelnoi Raboty" (Against Opportunistic Methods in Grain Collection Work), *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* (*Economic Life*), August 18, 1932.

¹⁷⁹ "Kontrolnye Tsifry na 1932" (Control Figures for 1932), *Pravda*, December 26, 1931.

¹⁸⁰ *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, May 26, 1932.

¹⁸¹ "Osnovnye Voprosy Uborki Urozhaya" (Basic Problems of Crop Harvesting) editorial, *Bolshevik*, No. 11-12 (1932), p. 2.

The basic decree, promulgated on May 6, 1932,¹⁸² deals with two main points: first, it states that the grain collections from the collectives and the individual farms must be decreased by 43.2 million quintals, in comparison with the 1931 program, making the total grain collections from the collectivized and individual sectors equal 180 million quintals (Par. 2, subdivision *a*). Second, it declares that after the grain collections and seed funds of 1932 have been completed, i. e., after January 15, 1933, the members of the collectives as well as the individual peasants will be given full opportunity to market their surplus grain without interference, either at the bazaars or the markets, or through the stores of the collectives, as they may desire (Par. 2, sub. *d*). While this provision implies a change in the price system, the decree contains no definite statement to that effect. The problem of price was clarified by the decree of May 20. In addition to the provisions decreasing the sales tax on products marketed by the individual farmers and increasing the total exemption of the collectives and their members (Par. 1), this decree contains a provision which states that the "selling operations are . . . to be effected at prices determined in the [open] market" (Par. 9).¹⁸³

The livestock problem of the collectives was causing the State a great deal of uneasiness and was admittedly a weak part of the new system of agriculture. In 1931 the overzealous local authorities attempted for the second time to collectivize all the livestock of the members of the collectives, i. e., even that part the individual ownership of which was guaranteed by the *artel* constitution. To counteract these attempts the peasants resorted to the well-tried method of wholesale slaughter of cattle. The Communist Party was obliged to declare that "the practice of the forcible seizure of cows and small stock from the members of the collectives has noth-

¹⁸² "O Plane Khlebozagovok i Urozhaia i Razvertyvanii Kolkhoznnoi Torgovli Khlebom" (Concerning the Plan for Grain Collections, Harvest and Marketing of Grain of the Collectives), *Pravda*, May 7, 1932.

¹⁸³ "O Poriadke Proizvodstva Torgovli Kolkhozov, Kolkhoznikov i Trudiaschikhsia Krestian i Umenshenii Naloga na Torgovliu s Khoziaistvennymi Produktami" (Concerning the Procedure of Marketing by the Collectives, Their Members and Individual Peasants and the Decrease of Taxation on the Sales of Agricultural Products), *Pravda*, May 21, 1932.

ing in common with the party program."¹⁸⁴ But the first real move in the direction of solving the livestock problem was the decree of May 10, 1932¹⁸⁵ which provided for a 50 per cent reduction in the State livestock procurements during the next eight months, reducing the gross total from 1,414 thousand tons to 716 thousand tons. The decree also stipulated that after the completion of this drastically revised program, the peasant would have the right to dispose of his surplus in the same manner as he disposed of his grain surplus.

The new price element which characterizes these decrees is of some significance. When the peasant's right to sell his surplus was established by the October Session of the Communist Party in 1931, it was with the understanding that these sales were to be permitted only "on a basis of Soviet price policies", i. e., State-controlled and fixed. Any other price policy of tempting the peasants into selling their surplus was bound "to turn upside down the very basic principle underlying the decisions of the October Session of the Communist Party."¹⁸⁶ The right to sell grain now at an open market price is a complete reversal of what had been a cardinal principle underlying the Soviet grain price system since about 1929.

These three main decrees were designed to stimulate the peasant into action. The decrease of grain and livestock procurements would insure the fulfillment of the State collection program; the right to sell the remaining surplus at the price prevalent on the open market would work to the advantage of the peasant and of the collective as a whole. Such action at a time when the State was in great need of agricultural products in order to insure the completion of the country's indus-

¹⁸⁴ Declaration by the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued March 26, 1932, "O Prinuditelnom Obobshchestvlenii Skota" (Concerning the Forcible Socialization of Livestock), *Pravda*, Mar. 27, 1932.

¹⁸⁵ "O Plane Skotozagotovok i o Miasnoi Torgovle Kolkhozov, Kolkhoznikov i Edinolichnykh Trudiashchikhsia Krestian" (On the Plan of Livestock Procurements and Meat Trade by the Collective Farms, Their Members and Individual Peasants), *Pravda*, May 11, 1932.

¹⁸⁶ Zonin, I., "O Sovkhozno-Kolkhoznai Torgovle i Zadachakh Sovetov" (Concerning the Kolkhoz and State-Farm Trade and Problem of the Soviets), *Sovetskoe Stroitelstvo*, April 1932, p. 95.

trialization program, was a concession which the State was forced to grant to the peasants. Nevertheless, a close examination of the enacted measures reveals that the concession was less far-reaching than is indicated at first glance, and that the changes were effected on Communist rather than on peasant terms. This view is based on the following consideration: despite the introduction of numerous changes, the *system* of collections remained intact. The outstanding feature of the New Economic Policy, it may be recalled, was the substitution of a food tax for the system of grain and livestock procurements. During that period *each* peasant knew exactly how much he was to deliver to the State, and he could dispose of the rest as he saw fit. Now, however, with the system of collections unchanged, the collectives could trade their grain on the open market only after the fulfillment of the entire State grain collection plan. Even though a certain collective or any number of collectives had fulfilled their obligations, they could not sell their surplus unless *all* the collectives had fulfilled their quotas. In order to enjoy the privilege granted by the decrees they were also obliged first to make good the collections of the defaulters. The joint responsibility created a situation whereby a collective farm could not be quite certain of the amount of its surplus even though the crop had been harvested and gathered. The possibility, therefore, of an upward revision of the grain collections program of May 5, 1932 was not excluded. Whether under the circumstances the collectivized peasant would be moved to great exertions, to translate into concrete form the main aim of the enactments, remained to be seen.

No such zealous efforts were revealed in the sowing, the harvesting and particularly the grain collections. Nor did the new decree concerning the distribution of income¹⁸⁷ improve matters much, notwithstanding the fact that it was especially favorable to those who did good work. It appeared from the very outset that the harvesting moved on at an extremely slow pace. By July 15 the Ukraine had harvested only 1,237,000

¹⁸⁷ "O Raspredelenii Dokhodov v Kolkhozakh na 1932" (Distribution of Income in the Collective Farms for the Year 1932), *Pravda*, July 6, 1932.

hectares, while at a corresponding date of the previous year in analogous climatic conditions, 5,116,000 hectares were harvested.¹⁸⁸ This divergence was diminished somewhat as the work proceeded. But on the whole it persisted in the most important grain-growing regions as well as in the other agricultural sections of the country.¹⁸⁹ At no time was the pace of 1931 regained by either the socialized or the private sector. By August 20 the difference stood at 9 million hectares and early in September the difference was still 7.5 million hectares.¹⁹⁰ This may explain why the harvesting season extended until about the middle of October.

The governmental agencies directed their efforts to the establishment and maintenance of a definite relationship between certain types of work which take place during the harvesting season. Setting up grain in stacks, for instance, must follow close upon mowing. Otherwise the loss of grain sustained in the fields during the previous year would be repeated. It was decidedly to the advantage of all the peasants to act as suggested, but the actions of the collectivized peasants as revealed by the following figures show a complete disregard of that sound advice:

REGIONS IN THE UKRAINE *			
	<i>Dnepropetrovsk</i>	<i>Odessa</i>	<i>Kharkov</i>
Mowing (as of Aug. 1, 1932)	84.5% (of program)	75.2	52.4
Stacking of grain (as of Aug. 1, 1932)	6.4% " "	6.1	6.3

* "Uborka na Ukraine" (Harvesting in the Ukraine), *Pravda*, August 7, 1932 (figures cited in this editorial).

In general, the harvesting and threshing processes were carried out by the collectivized peasantry of the Ukraine in such a manner that from 34 to 36 million quintals of grain were wasted in the fields. This amount alone could have cov-

¹⁸⁸ *Pravda*, July 21, 1932.

¹⁸⁹ See bulletins issued by the Commissariat of Agriculture of U.S.S.R., No. 3, *Pravda*, July 26, 1932; No. 4, *Pravda*, July 30, 1932; No. 9, *Pravda*, August 26, 1932.

¹⁹⁰ Bulletin No. 12, *Pravda*, September 10, 1932.

ered two-thirds of the grain the Ukraine was to have delivered to the State.¹⁹¹

The yield summarized, in a sense, the entire work on the collective fields. In the State grain farms the yield of spring wheat per hectare, their basic grain culture, was 6.7 quintals.¹⁹² Separate yield figures for the collective and individual farms for 1932 have not been published, but the average grain yield per hectare for the grain crops throughout the Soviet Union (including the State farms), was 7 quintals.¹⁹³ This figure may be accepted as representative of the approximate yield per collectivized hectare for the following reasons: first, the collective farms represented 75 per cent of the total cultivated area of the Soviet Union; second, the collective farms of the main producing regions comprised over 90 per cent of the area of those regions, and finally, the average yield per hectare of a collective farm during 1929-31 has never exceeded the yield per hectare of an individual farm by more than 6.5 per cent. It would seem, then, that even though the collective farms were technically better equipped than in 1931, their yield in 1932 was lower than in 1931, and considerably below the 1932 program figure, namely, 8.5 quintals per hectare.

Nowhere was the peasant's attitude toward the Soviet State more clearly expressed than in the manner in which he was supplying it with agricultural products. And it was in consideration of this fact that a leading member of the Communist Party commented as follows: "Our achievements and shortcomings in the village . . . are expressed particularly clearly in the matter of grain procurements . . . the latter always constituting the problem around which a bitter class struggle was fought."¹⁹⁴ Before the period of mass collectivization

¹⁹¹ Sulkovskii, F., "Sovetskaia Ukraina v Borbe za Vysokii Urozhai" (The Soviet Ukraine in the Struggle for a Higher Yield), *Pravda*, Aug. 22, 1933.

¹⁹² Teriaeva, A. P. (ed.), *Sovkhozy k Piatnadtsatoi Godovshchine Oktiabria* (State Farms on the Fifteenth Anniversary of October) (Selkolkhozgiz, Moscow, 1932), p. 105.

¹⁹³ Kuibishev, V. V., Report on the Program of the first Year of the Second Five-Year-Plan, *Pravda*, Jan. 28, 1933.

¹⁹⁴ Kaganovich, L. M., "Tseli i Zadachi Politicheskikh Otdelov M.T.S. i Sovkhozov" (Aims and Problems of the Political Departments of the M.T.S. and State Farms), *Sotsialisticheskaiia Rekonstruktsiia Selskogo Khoziaistva* (Socialist Reconstruction of Agriculture), No. 2 (1933), p. 8.

the difficulties encountered in collecting grain were attributed to the practices of the essentially individualistic village, dominated by a large group of well-to-do-peasants. But even after the elimination of this group, when "from the point of view of class structure in the village we are now stronger than ever . . . the grain collection campaign of 1932-33 proceeded with greater difficulties than in 1931-32".¹⁹⁵

It was expected that with the decrease of the amount of grain collections and with the further growth of the collectivized area, the entire grain collection program would be carried out before January 15, 1933, without any difficulty. This expectation did not materialize. The decrease of the first and the increase of the second element turned out to be entirely extraneous to the fortunes of the third. The monthly grain collection quotas are revealing. For the first 20 days of July the collective farms fulfilled only 10.2 per cent and during the first 25 days of the month all the socialized and individual sectors delivered to the State 23.6 per cent of their quotas.¹⁹⁶ The figures for the months following bespeak the same tendencies. The results of the October grain collections are usually indicative of the entire campaign. Hence, the collection during the first 25 days of October, which was 25.8 per cent of the amount anticipated, throws light on the state of the campaign. These poor results were largely attributed to the unwillingness of the main grain-growing sections to part with their grain.¹⁹⁷ During December the collections in the Ukraine went from bad to worse and, as to the general fulfillment of the yearly plan, this granary of the Soviet Union appears among the worst offenders.¹⁹⁸

To the old factors which were largely responsible for the struggle between the peasants and the grain collection authorities, must be added a new one, born of the May Decrees, namely, the grain speculation, or the peasants' practice of selling grain before January 15, in regions which were yet to fulfill their grain collection quotas. Grain appeared on the market soon after the harvesting campaign was under way.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁹⁷ *Pravda*, October 29, 1932.

¹⁹⁶ *Pravda*, July 27, 1932.

¹⁹⁸ *Pravda*, January 7, 1933.

The temptation to violate the law was too great, in view of the fact that in certain markets a *pood* of grain sold for between 60 and 80 rubles.¹⁹⁹ This price, which prevailed in one of the markets in the North Caucasus region, explains in part why this region carried out only 9 per cent of the monthly quota of deliveries to the State during the first half of August. This case was not peculiar to this particular region; with but slight reservations it may be regarded as indicative of a wide-spread practice. Stalin's report, "On the Work in the Village,"²⁰⁰ bears witness to this observation.

By the end of 1932 it became obvious that the problems faced by the Soviet Government consisted in how to make all the peasants work the collectivized hectares with as much zeal as they did their individual holdings; how to convince them that through proper tillage of the land they would be advancing their own welfare; how to impress upon them the fact that the concentration of all their efforts upon the improvement of the remains of their individual economy at the expense of the collective economy as a whole was essentially an attempt to undermine the progress of the collective farms; and finally, how to bring them to the realization that one of their most important duties toward the State was the voluntary and timely fulfillment of the grain deliveries.

But were the peasants to be blamed for disregarding the fundamental State policies? Stalin's answer is an unequivocal, "NO!"

Not in the peasants must we seek for the causes of the grain collection difficulties, but in our own ranks. Because *we* are at the helm of power, *we* have at our disposal the national resources, *we* are called upon to direct the work of the collectives and *we* have to shoulder the entire responsibility for the work in the village.²⁰¹

More specifically, however, the blame is to be placed at the door of "our local comrades, who failed to comprehend the new situation in the village created by the announcement con-

¹⁹⁹ "Pochemu ne Vupolniaiutsia Plany Khlebozagotovok" (Why the Grain Collection Plans Are Not Carried Out), *Pravda*, August 21, 1932.

²⁰⁰ January 17, 1933.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, italics Stalin's.

cerning the grain trade of the collective farms." ²⁰² They should have realized that the peasant's reaction to the enacted measure would run in the direction of selling on the open market as much grain as possible. That being the case, "it was the Communists' duty to intensify and speed up the grain collections by all available means . . . at the very beginning of harvesting, in July, 1932." ²⁰³ This they failed to do.

Many local leaders committed yet another grave error which, in Stalin's opinion, was at the root of all the troubles in the collectivized village. This mistake is due to the fact that they "overestimated the collectives as a new form of agricultural organization . . . turned them into an ikon. They decided that with the organization of the collectives everything else had been accomplished." ²⁰⁴ Stalin viewed this as a fundamental misconception since "the collectives represent only a *form* of organization—true enough, socialistic, but none the less, only a form." ²⁰⁵ But a form of organization is not a deciding factor because in the long run "everything depends upon the *substance* which is poured into this form." ²⁰⁶ Amplifying, Stalin pointed out that the following may be stated with certainty. "From the point of view of Leninism, the collectives as well as the Soviets, taken as a form of organization, represent . . . only a weapon . . . the main point is who possesses this weapon and against whom it is directed." ²⁰⁷ Should anti-Soviet forces find their way into a collective, which is primarily "a perfected form of mass organization", ²⁰⁸ the effect of their work would be more disastrous for the State than similar activities in a village composed of numerous individual farms. In other words, Stalin maintained that at the present time a collective is a weapon which may still be utilized against the Revolution; the Communist in the village who failed to understand this must shoulder the blame for the difficulties encountered there.

The immediate problem, then, was how to lead the collec-

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, italics Stalin's.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, italics Stalin's.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

tives out of the crisis in the shortest possible time. And the remedy applied was a combination of administrative and economic measures.

The administrative measure aimed at a thorough Bolshevization of the collective farms. The Machine Tractor Stations were entrusted with the practical application of this policy.²⁰⁹ For this purpose special political departments were established at the M.T.S. It is the duty of these departments to enlighten the collectives along strictly Party lines; to provide the "Party eye", and to extend the Party's control to all the spheres of work and life in the collectives. Their "political face" was to be revealed, for there could be no place in the Soviet village for a "neutral" collective. More specifically, the most important duty of a political department is to "guarantee the unconditional and timely fulfillment by the *collectives and their members* of their obligations to the State".²¹⁰ All this was to be accomplished not by the mere issuance of orders, drawing up of resolutions and other forms of management on paper which had flooded the collectives in the past three years, but by keeping directly and constantly in touch and working shoulder-to-shoulder with the collectivized peasantry.

Although the main aim of the outlined decree is not an expression of an entirely new policy, it marks, nevertheless, a turning-point in the attitude of the Communists toward the collectivized peasant. The idealization of the collectivized peasant came to an end; the joining of a collective farm did not necessarily involve any basic change in the peasant's nature and attitude. From the Communist point of view he has turned out to be a very ungrateful person who refuses to comprehend the fact that since the rapid industrialization of the country requires large supplies of agricultural products, his business is to supply them unconditionally. Instead, as late as the beginning of 1933 he still persisted in what the Communists considered a counter-revolutionary attitude: "First,

²⁰⁹ "Tseli i Zadachi Politicheskikh Otdelov M.T.S. i Sovkhozov" (Aims and Problems of the Political Departments of the Machine Tractor Stations and State Farms), Resolution carried out by the Communist Party on January 11, 1933, *Pravda*, Jan. 13, 1933.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Section II. Italics in the resolution.

the collective, then the State." This was a direct challenge to the supremacy of the Communist leadership in the village. And having taken up the challenge, the Communists decided to assert their leadership in the collectives in the shortest possible time.

The Communists realized, however, that the new powers given to the M.T.S. were not sufficient guarantee that the members of the collectives would follow unreservedly the Communist leadership in the village. In order that they should discharge their obligations to the State voluntarily the administrative measures had to be buttressed with economic measures which would directly benefit the members of the collectives and, as Stalin expressed it at a later date, "make all the collectivized peasants well-to-do."²¹¹ The promulgation of the Decree of January 19, 1933²¹² was considered by the Soviet Government as the economic measure destined to raise the economic status of the collectivized peasant. The outstanding feature of this decree was the provision for the substitution of a fixed grain tax levied upon each cultivated hectare of the land, for the existing contract system of grain collection (Par. 1). The peasant was paid for the grain delivered in this manner at a price fixed by the State. The total of the peasants' obligations was determined by the area already sown with winter grain crops and the area planned by the yearly program for the spring grain crops (Par. 2).

The figures given below show the amount of the grain tax in the fourteen most productive grain-growing regions: the tax is not a uniform one, but varies with the section of the country, as well as with the type of farm, collective or individual. It is the task of the local Soviets to see to it that the amount of the per-hectare tax on the individual farm is from 5 to 10 per cent larger than the tax on a collective farm in

²¹¹ Stalin, J., from speech delivered at the First All-Union Congress of shock-workers of the collectives on Feb. 19, 1933, *Pravda*, Feb. 23, 1933.

²¹² "Ob Obiazatelnoi Postanovke Zerna Gosudarstvu Kolkhozami i Edinolichnymi Khoziaistvami" (On Obligatory Delivery of Grain to the State by the Collective and Individual Farms), decree issued by the Council of People's Commissars and the Central Committee of the Communist Party, *Pravda*, Jan. 20, 1933.

the same district (Par. 7). The reduction in the grain tax levied on collective farms served by Machine Tractor Stations is due to the fact that where the latter perform all the basic field operations,²¹³ they receive for these services 20 per cent of the gross grain crop.²¹⁴

GRAIN TAX—BY REGIONS *
(in quintals per hectare)

	<i>Collectives Served By M.T.S.</i>	<i>Collectives Not Served By M.T.S.</i>
Crimea	2.7	3.3
Ukraine	2.3	3.1
Eastern Siberia	2.7	3.1
Western Siberia	2.1	2.5
Central Black Soil	2.6	3.0
North Caucasus	2.1	2.5
Kirghiz	1.9	2.2
Kazakstan	1.5	2.0
Tartar	1.8	2.3
Middle Volga	1.8	2.3
Bashkir	1.8	2.3
Lower Volga	1.8	2.2
Far East	1.3	1.8
Ural	1.5	1.9

* *Pravda*, Jan. 20, 1933.

Here, as in the May Decrees, the peasant is tempted into work by the surplus of agricultural products he has a right to dispose of in the open market. The peasant's conviction that the surplus would be available at the close of the agricultural year is all-important. By decreasing the amount of both grain and livestock procurements the May Decrees attempted to assure him of a surplus, but by leaving the old system of procurements intact, these very decrees vitiated their main purpose. This was corrected by the Decree of January 19, 1933, enabling the collectivized farmer to calculate in advance the

²¹³ *Note*: Basic field operations include plowing, sowing, harvesting and threshing.

²¹⁴ "Primernyi Dogovor M.T.S. s Kolkhozami" (Typical Agreement between a Machine Tractor Station and Collective Farms), Par. 10. Paragraph 11 of the agreement states that for plowing alone the collective farms must turn over to the M.T.S. 10 per cent of the gross grain crop and for threshing, 8 per cent.

amount of agricultural products to be turned over to the State and the approximate amount which would remain in his own possession. The collectives as such, their members and the individual peasants of a given administrative unit—republic, region, province—have a right to sell their surplus after a particular unit as a whole fulfills the grain-tax obligation, and after the necessary seed funds are set aside.²¹⁵ The major evil of the old grain collection system is excluded, namely, the possibility of raising the grain delivery quotas of a particular region due to the non-fulfillment of the original quota in a different region of the country. Thus, the scope of the joint responsibility principle has been narrowed down considerably. To insure a more rapid delivery of the grain tax, and to avoid the necessity of raising it even within a particular administrative unit, there is a provision to the effect that all those who fail to pay the grain tax by specified dates are to pay a fine equal to the amount for which the undelivered grain would sell in the open market. The offenders must also pay immediately the entire yearly grain tax.²¹⁶

The new law is distinctly to the advantage of those who work best, since with a grain tax fixed in advance, the better the fields are tilled—the greater the yield—the greater the surplus. The additional income from sales of this surplus in the open market would lead to still greater efforts. This law, then, is not an administrative fiat imposed upon the collectives by the State but on the contrary an appeal for the coöperation of the collectivized peasantry expressed in terms easily comprehended by them.

In addition to the general policies outlined above, the State enacted a series of measures bearing directly upon the forthcoming spring sowing campaign of the first year of the Second Five-Year-Plan.

The characteristic feature of the spring sowing campaigns

²¹⁵ "Ob Obiazatelnoi Postanovke Zerna Gosudarstvu Kolkhozami i Edino-lichnymi Khoziaistvami" (On Obligatory Delivery of Grain to the State by the Collective and Individual Farms), Decree issued by the Council of People's Commissars and the Central Committee of the Communist Party, *Pravda*, Jan. 20, 1933 (Par. 15).

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Par. 16.

of the past three years—the insistence upon an ever greater extension of the sowing area — was absent. Quality rather than quantity was emphasized. In accordance with this tendency the area sown under the spring crops was cut from 102 million hectares in 1932, to 97.5 million hectares,²¹⁷ and to a finally revised figure of 95 million hectares.²¹⁸

Out of this total the collective farms were to plant almost 67 million hectares, the State farms 10 million and the individual farmers 18 million.²¹⁹ The Soviet Government did not fail to stress the necessity and the importance of having all the tractors well repaired,²²⁰ and the livestock well conditioned for field work.²²¹ A recurrent theme was the necessity of timely seed collections. Certain areas such as the Ukraine and North Caucasus, which, due to poor yield, excessive grain collections and consequent food difficulties had to consume all the available grain, remained with little or no seed funds. In this case the Soviet Government loaned to the collectives of the Ukraine almost 3.1 million quintals of seed and to those of North Caucasus over 2 million quintals.²²²

Not all the policies and measures introduced during the months of January and February 1933 found their complete and immediate application in the sowing and harvesting campaigns. The work performed was not up to the highest standards. But the peasantry, realizing that collectivization had

²¹⁷ "O Meropriiatiakh Po Povysheniiu Urozhaia" (On Measures Concerning the Increase in Yield), decree issued by Council of Commissars of U.S.S.R. and Central Committee of the Communist Party, Sept. 29, 1932, *Izvestia*, Sept. 30, 1932.

²¹⁸ *Pravda*, Feb. 1, 1933.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ "O Remonte Traktorov k Vesennei Posevnoi Kampanii" (Concerning Tractor Repairs for the Spring Sowing Campaign), Decree issued by the Council of Commissars of the U.S.S.R. and Central Committee of the Communist Party, Jan. 29, 1933, *Ekonomicheskaiia Zhizn*, Jan. 30, 1933.

²²¹ "O Podgotovke Rabochego Skota k Vesennemu Sevu" (On the Condition of Draft Animals for the Spring Sowing), Decree promulgated Feb. 1, 1933, *Pravda*, Feb. 11, 1933.

²²² "O Semennoi Pomoshchi Kolkhozam i Sovkhozam Ukrainy i Severnogo Kavkaza" (Concerning the Assistance in Seed Given to the Collective and State Farms in the Ukraine and North Caucasus), Decree promulgated Feb. 25, 1933, *Pravda*, Feb. 26, 1933.

come to stay and dreading the repetition of last year's food shortages, managed to work the fields better than in the three preceding years. The official bulletins of the Commissariat of Agriculture revealed that during the months of April and May sowing proceeded at a more rapid pace than during the three previous planting campaigns.²²³ Judged by the field work of 1932 the Ukraine and North Caucasus lagged far behind many other sections of the Soviet Union. This year, however, even these regions managed to raise last year's low level both quantitatively and qualitatively. The North Caucasus, for instance, planted during the first 15 days of the campaign 26 million hectares in 1931, 18 million in 1932, and 32 million in 1933.²²⁴ The sowing was completed by June 20, later than it had been anticipated, but considering the fact that during the height of the season more was sown and in a more efficient manner than in 1932, the Soviet Government felt that real progress had been made toward a higher yield.

The harvesting of the crop did not proceed as per schedule. This was particularly true of the early and middle parts of August. Judging by the reports from the fields, the chief difficulty was in the extremely poor work of the tractors and other modern agricultural implements. In certain Machine Tractor Stations from one-third to one-half of the tractors and combines could hardly be utilized at all.²²⁵ The reports covering the work of the tractors for the entire Ukraine, the North Caucasus and the Central-Black-Soil region call attention to their very low productivity; over 50 per cent of the normal time schedules was wasted due to poor repairs, inexperienced tractor-drivers and field mechanics.²²⁶ But despite the poor showing of the mechanical section, there was considerable improvement in the work, thanks to the excellent weather conditions, the promise by the government of cows

²²³ See bulletins in *Pravda* for April 25 and 30; May 5, 11, 15, 20, 25, 30 and June 5, 1933.

²²⁴ *Pravda*, April 6, 1933.

²²⁵ *Pravda*, July 27, Aug. 2 and 10, 1933.

²²⁶ Vareikis, I., "Mashina Delaet Seichas v Derevne Muzyku" (The Machine Now Provides the Village with Music), *Pravda*, Nov. 7, 1933.

to those lacking them, governmental measures against additional grain collections, and the eagerness of the collectivized peasants to share in the good crop. From the end of August on there was noticeable a more rapid tempo than in 1932 in all the various phases connected with the harvesting season.²²⁷

From the Communist point of view the crowning achievement of the collectives was the early fulfillment of the grain obligations. The figures cited below are for both the collectivistic and individualistic sectors, but in view of the fact that the collectives alone accounted for over 80 per cent of the entire grain tax delivered to the State, we may accept the figures as reflecting the manner in which the collectives carried out their obligations. The grain deliveries began almost simultaneously with the harvesting of the crop. While during the months of July, August and September the State expected to collect 55 per cent of the total grain tax, it actually collected 80 per cent.²²⁸ This compares favorably with a 45 per cent fulfillment of the plan for the same period for 1932. On November 20, almost 6 weeks ahead of the final date set by the government, collection of the grain tax was completed. The amount of grain collected was 21 per cent larger than in 1932.²²⁹ By December 15 the collectivized peasantry discharged a further obligation to the State, in addition to the grain tax, by full payment in kind to the Machine Tractor Stations for services rendered.²³⁰

The Communists pointed out that this was the first time since the October Revolution that the grain collection campaign was so well organized and carried out in so short a time. No region was burdened with additional grain quotas because this year's plan was carried out not only by the Soviet Government as a whole, but by each republic, region or province

²²⁷ See official bulletins of the Commissariat of Agriculture; *Pravda*, Aug. 27, Sept. 5, 11, 16, 21, Oct. 16 and 21, 1933.

²²⁸ "Velikaia Pobeda Partii" (The Great Victory of the Party), editorial in *Bolshevik*, Dec. 15, 1933, p. 6.

²²⁹ Chernov, M., "O Tom Chto Obespechilo Pobedu" (Concerning that Which Insured the Victory), *Pravda*, Dec. 16, 1933.

²³⁰ "Torzhestvo Novykh Metodov Partiinogo Rukovodstva" (The Triumph of the New Methods Used by the Party Leadership), editorial in *Pravda*, Dec. 1, 1933.

separately.²³¹ Of great significance in the eyes of the Communists was the fact that these achievements did not come by way of mass compulsion: "This year's feature of outstanding importance was that the collectivized . . . farmers discharged their obligations to the State without recourse to any form of mass repressions."²³² Instead, it was largely the Soviet Government's strenuous struggle against deviations from the original meaning of the grain tax which convinced the peasants of the government's intention to live up to its promise. It would seem then, that the collectivized peasantry followed the leadership of the Communist Party as regards life and work on the collective farms, only on condition that after the grain quotas had been delivered, as contemplated by the law of January 19, 1933, there would be no additional grain levies, and the peasants would be sole owners of their surpluses.

From the Communist point of view the grim severity of the struggle for collectivization of agriculture is justified by the results already attained. The hardships to which a considerable part of the collectivized peasantry was subjected during the years 1930 and early 1933, are brushed aside as factors devoid of any importance. "Compare your difficulties and privations", Stalin stated at the conference of the shock brigade workers of the collective farms, "with the difficulties and privations the workers had to go through [in 1918-1920] and you will see that yours do not warrant even serious consideration".²³³ But of utmost importance is the fact that over 15 million households representing 65 per cent of the total peasant households are consolidated into 225,000 collective farms comprising 74 per cent of the entire grain cultivated area, while the remaining 35 per cent cultivate only 15 per cent of this area. The wasteful strips that dotted the Russian countryside for hundreds of years have almost disappeared. Uncultivated large tracts of land, which could not be worked with the equipment and through the efforts of an individual peasant,

²³¹ Chernov, *loc. cit.*, see comparative table dealing with this matter.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ Stalin, J., "On the Work in the Village", *Pravda*, Jan. 17, 1933.

have been put to use now. The former basic agricultural implements of the Russian village, such as the wooden plow, the sickle, the scythe, the hand-rake and the flail are rapidly giving way before more than 200,000 tractors and other modern agricultural machinery with which the State has supplied the collectives during the last four years. While the tractor capacity now available (over 3 million horse power) is less than 20 per cent of the total required for the complete mechanization of agriculture, a solid foundation for the technical revolution has been laid. The present production capacity of the Soviet tractor plants, amounting to 80,000 units yearly, will be increased to 120,000 with the completion of the Cheliabinsk plant; this, combined with the numerous modern factories producing agricultural implements, is an indication that the means for carrying out the technical revolution are at hand.

The immediate problem is the proper utilization of the tractors and machines. Although much has been done in this direction during the last few years, not nearly enough has been accomplished toward the solution of the pressing problem. Iakovlev's report on the conditions of the mechanized sector²³⁴ was succinctly summed up by Stalin in the following statement: "As for the utilization of the tractors and machines, the unsatisfying state of affairs is so clear and so generally known that it doesn't need any proof."²³⁵ This condition is aggravated by the great reduction of livestock throughout the Soviet Union (see table on next page).

The huge loss of livestock, particularly in horses and horned cattle which could have been utilized on the fields, can be restored only after years of strenuous effort. Even if the tractors and machines were fully utilized, their present number could hardly compensate for that loss. But considering the present low level of productivity, the urgent problem confronting the collective movement consists not only in a

²³⁴ Iakovlev, Ya., Commissar of Agriculture of the U.S.S.R., "Itogi Selskokhoziaistvennogo Goda i Vesenniaia Posevnaia Kampaniia 1934" (Results of the Agricultural Year 1933 and the Spring Sowing Campaign of 1934), *Izvestia*, Jan. 6, 1934.

²³⁵ From Stalin's report to the Seventeenth Party Congress, *Pravda*, Jan. 28, 1934.

TOTAL LIVESTOCK IN RUSSIA IN 1916 AND U.S.S.R. 1928-1933 *
(in millions of heads)

Year	Horses	Horned Cattle	Hogs	Sheep and Goats
1916	35.1	58.9	20.3	115.2
1928	34.5	70.5	25.9	146.6
1929	34.6	67.1	20.3	146.7
1930	30.7	53.9	13.3	113.1
1931	26.2	47.9	14.4	77.7
1932	19.6	40.7	11.6	52.1
1933	16.6	38.6	12.2	50.6

* The figures for the years 1928-30 are taken from the *Statistical Handbook of the U.S.S.R.* (Moscow, 1932), p. 191. The figures for all other years are taken from Stalin's report to the Seventeenth Party Congress, *Pravda*, Jan. 28, 1934.

regeneration of the entire livestock-breeding industry and in a steady rise in the output of tractors and machines, but also in the complete mastery of the latter as rapidly as possible.

The social structure of the village has undergone a fundamental change within the last few years. The central figure there is the collectivized peasant. Notwithstanding the fact that he is still permeated with a petty-bourgeois ideology, the Communists believe that he has been shifted from the material base without which further growth of purely capitalistic tendencies is impossible. Moreover, the kulaks as a class have been expropriated and wiped out. To this extent the collective movement has served to eradicate the class differentiation in the village.

Important as are the enumerated gains, from the Communist point of view the main achievement of collectivization of agriculture lies in the fact that while in 1929-30 the individual peasants delivered to the State 144 million quintals of grain and the collective farms 20 million, in 1933 the individual peasants supplied slightly less than 23 million quintals while the collective farms supplied the State with 164 quintals of grain. The hope expressed at the Sixteenth Party Congress in 1930 for a speedy reversal of the rôles of the two agricultural systems has finally been realized. Considering the dominating force which the collective farms represent now in the Soviet village as compared with the remaining vestiges of individual farming, Stalin's statement made early in 1933 to

the effect that "the problem of the collectives is no more 'to be or not to be'" and that "the way to the old individual farming is now definitely closed"²³⁶ can hardly be questioned any longer.

The total grain crop of 1933 was estimated at 898 million quintals²³⁷ or a 22.5 per cent increase over last year's. This was not due to any appreciable increase in the 1933 area sown under grain, amounting as it did to only 1.5 million hectares more than in 1932. The increase was due to an estimated yield of 8.8 quintals per hectare as compared with 7 quintals in 1932. While this increase registered a definite improvement in the attempt to increase the productivity of the soil, it still is considerably short of the figures specified by the First Five-Year-Plan. The slow progress made during the period of mass collectivization in raising the yield to a higher level is not a result of the collective system as such. In the years prior to the period of mass collectivization there was evidence that the collective farms were capable of much greater productivity than the ordinary individual peasant farm despite the former's underequipment in both livestock and machines. The low level may be attributed to the "growing pains" of a system of large-scale agriculture created in such a short time, and the "over-night" transformation of an easy-going peasant on a small farm into a member of a collective farm embracing hundreds of hectares of land. The necessity of an unusually

²³⁶ From Stalin's report before the Joint Plenary Session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Committee of the Communist Party, *Pravda*, Jan. 10, 1933.

²³⁷ This figure reflects a preliminary estimate of the crop in the fields to be harvested, including a 10 per cent deduction for all possible losses. This allowance would serve its purpose if the crop were harvested with a minimum loss, or more concretely, with "technically unavoidable losses." This, however, was not the case in the summer of 1933. In many collectives the difference between the preliminary estimated yield per hectare and the actual yield as shown by the amount of threshed grain per hectare, stood not at 10 per cent, but at 20, 30 and 40 per cent. In view of this fact the figure of 898 million quintals would have to be subjected to a downward revision in order to ascertain the amount of grain actually gathered.

For an illuminating discussion of the method in which the yield of 1933 was estimated see N. Ossinski's article "Ob Uborke, Obmolote i Poteriakh" (Concerning the Harvesting of the Crop, Threshing and Losses), *Izvestia*, Sept. 21, 1933.

rapid adjustment required by the substitution of a tractor for a wooden plow militates against the fullest development of the productive forces created by the new system of agriculture. But by far the most important factors underlying the main difficulties in this field were the methods pursued by the Soviet Government in organizing and dealing with the collectives during the period from late 1929 to early 1933. The principle of voluntarism upon which the organization of the collectives was to have proceeded, was to a large degree superseded by direct and indirect compulsion. One of the main aims of the Five-Year-Plan in Agriculture, the close interrelation of the organization of large collective farms with a new technical base and a trained labor force, was vitiated because the speed at which collectivization was carried on was such, that it resulted in a large collectivized area being thrown out of gear with the other component parts of the Five-Year-Plan. Thus the Plan became ineffective shortly after its inauguration and the work in the village was largely carried out through the promulgation of administrative measures. The latter succeeded not only in collectivizing almost 75 per cent of the cultivated land area of the country, but also in antagonizing a considerable part of the peasantry thus collectivized. The attitude of the peasants was fully reflected in the refusal to till the land properly, in the resulting low yield of the collectivized fields, and in the peasantry's preference to slaughter the livestock rather than turn it over to the collective farms.

The results of the agricultural year of 1933 have shown that at that time the problem of increasing the productivity of the land was inextricably bound up with the problem of how to infuse into the collective movement a will to press forward. The answer was found in a change of attitude on the part of the Communist Party toward the most important of all known agricultural machines—the peasant. This involved a shift of emphasis from coercive and repressive measures to policies more sympathetic to the economic interests of the collectivized peasants. In order that these interests be fully realized, a mutually advantageous exchange of goods must take place. The tendency now is in this direction, since

a considerable part of this program is likely to be achieved through the realization of the Second Five-Year-Plan, the main objective of which is the increased production of consumers' goods at lower prices. As more of the peasants' needs would thus be satisfied, and an incentive to work created, so may they be expected to move to greater and greater efforts. But until such time as there exists a fully developed incentive to such efforts, it is premature to judge adequately the extent to which in Russian conditions a collective system of agriculture is superior to an individualistic system.

The Communists view the organization of the collective farms not only as a means of raising large crops, but also as a major move toward building socialism in the village and in the Soviet Union as a whole. Such an achievement depends upon the complete liquidation of the differences between the city and the village, with a classless society arising in consequence. In order to do away with classes, in Lenin's opinion, it was necessary "to eradicate the difference between the workers and the peasants, to turn all into workers". Thus, in order to solve the central problem of the October Revolution, the creation of a unified, planned, socialistic economy, the Soviet Government must concern itself not only with making the collectivized peasant work to the best of his abilities, but must also proceed to the herculean task of de-peasantizing the peasant. Will the artel type of collective farm as now constituted be capable of accomplishing these two things simultaneously? One is inclined to question such a possibility, since the noticeable improvement of the work in the artel was due to governmental legislation which accentuated rather than eradicated the individualistic proclivities of its members. An agricultural system where the peasant cannot accumulate capital goods and where the State-owned land and the modern equipment are worked collectively, is unquestionably a break with traditions handed down by generations of small cultivators. But the perpetuation of this very type of a collective farm that allows its members to carry on a limited individual economy of their own and gives them the right to dispose on the open market of agricultural products earned as members of

the collective is not necessarily conducive to the elimination of the acquisitive ideas of the peasantry. One wonders, therefore, whether the Soviet Government will not replace the collective farm with a State farm where the collectivized peasants will be transformed into agricultural workers and purged of a centuries-old peasant ideology. One may also venture to suggest that the road between the present collective farm and the State farm—the “grain factory”—should be traveled slowly and carefully, for the attitude of the peasants toward the Soviet State during the period of mass collectivization and under the subsequent agricultural policies of 1933 is a concrete proof that the process of building socialism in the Russian village must proceed upon the maxim enunciated by Lenin, namely, “step by step, and inch by inch.” *

W. LADEJINSKY

NEW YORK CITY

*I am deeply indebted to Professor Geroid Tanquary Robinson, of the History Department of Columbia University, not only for the guidance and criticism of this study from its very inception, but also for helping me to realize the significance of the agrarian problem in the Old and New Russias.